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Report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1879 (2009), by which the Council, following the request of the Government of Nepal and the recommendation of the Secretary-General, renewed the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) until 23 January 2010. UNMIN was established as a special political mission in 2007 and its mandate included the monitoring of the management of arms and armed personnel of the Nepal Army and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN-M), which is now the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M).

2. The report reviews the progress of the peace process and the implementation of the mandate of UNMIN since my report to the Security Council of 26 October 2009 (S/2009/553).

II. Progress of the peace process

3. The peace process remained largely stalled during the reporting period. The tensions, deep differences and mistrust among the parties which I highlighted in my last report have persisted. While the major political parties maintained some level of dialogue and communication, no agreement has so far been reached on critical issues, including integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel, democratization of the Nepal Army and the scope of presidential authority. The proposed high-level political mechanism to serve as a dedicated forum for multi-party dialogue on key peace process issues has not been established. UCPN-M continued its series of nationwide protests calling for what it terms "civilian supremacy" over the Nepal Army, a demand that has its roots in the President's reversal, in May 2009, of the dismissal of the Chief of Army Staff by the then Maoist-led Government, following which the Government resigned.

4. The Special Committee to supervise, integrate and rehabilitate Maoist army personnel has not made headway in its work nor has it formally considered the draft proposals submitted by its Technical Committee. Important progress was achieved in November, with the announcement by UCPN-M that it would proceed quickly with the discharge of all its personnel disqualified through the UNMIN-led verification of the Maoist army in 2007. On 16 December, further significant

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movement was made with the signing of an action plan by the Government, UCPN-M and the United Nations for the discharge and rehabilitation of those disqualified as minors. Meanwhile, the Constituent Assembly has made slow progress on drafting the new constitution, which is to be promulgated by 28 May 2010.

5. As the stalemate has continued, tensions have risen within and among the parties, and talks among senior leaders of the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) and UCPN-M have remained inconclusive. The major Madheshi parties have continued to voice dissatisfaction with what they regard as their exclusion from political discussions among the major parties. President Ram Baran Yadav and UCPN-M Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, "Prachanda", also held discussions during the reporting period, but without apparent progress. In other forums, the President's role was discussed extensively in the context of the legal situation that could arise if the new constitution is not promulgated by 28 May 2010, and if no fresh deadline can be set.

6. UCPN-M-led protests calling for "civilian supremacy" disrupted daily life as well as the functioning of Government offices around the country. On the first day of a nationwide general strike held from 20 to 22 December, a major clash occurred between Maoist demonstrators and the security forces in Kathmandu, during which some of the worst violence since 2006 led to a reported 75 people being injured, several seriously. The protracted blockade of the Legislature-Parliament has resulted in a backlog of bills for consideration, including one that could resolve the issue of the Vice-President having taken his oath of office in Hindi. The obstruction was lifted briefly from 23 to 25 November to allow passage of the budget for the fiscal year 2009-2010, averting an imminent financial crisis. On 23 December, UCPN-M ended its almost seven-month blockade of the work of the Legislature-Parliament.

7. On 11 December, UCPN-M began a series of declarations of "autonomous federal states", notwithstanding the current work within the Constituent Assembly to determine the future federal structure of Nepal. The President, the Prime Minister, leaders of several parties, the media and several organizations representing ethnic groups in areas where the "states" have been declared strongly criticized this step, which UCPN-M downplayed as a "symbolic" action. My Representative has strongly urged that all parties should refrain from provocative statements or actions and permit the democratic process to function.

8. In a similar fashion, tensions escalated sharply over the seizure of land and crops by people with the support of UCPN-M-affiliated organizations. On 4 December, a fatal clash in the Kailali district in the far-western region between people who had occupied a forest area and security forces deployed to remove them led to four fatalities, including one member of the security forces. UCPN-M responded with protests the following day and with a nationwide shutdown on 6 December. The Government and a number of senior political leaders have called the recent UCPN-M actions breaches of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and have drawn this to UNMIN's attention.

9. During the reporting period, the Minister of Defence again called for fresh personnel recruitment for the Nepal Army. UNMIN has consistently stated that such recruitment would be in violation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The proposed recruitment of some 5,000 personnel has not yet begun.

10. The brinkmanship and confrontation between the Maoists and the Government, accompanied by a sharp and dangerous hardening of positions, is making a negotiated solution significantly more difficult.

A. Drafting of the constitution

11. The protracted political stalemate has had an impact on the constitution drafting process. The Constituent Assembly has concluded discussions on concept papers and draft texts submitted by 8 of its 10 thematic committees, intended to provide the basic tenets and language of the new constitution, however the committees on the determination of forms of governance of the State, on State restructuring and sharing of State power, and the Constitutional Committee itself, have yet to present their papers. The Constitutional Committee has the core responsibility for compiling the concept papers and texts into the draft of the constitution as well as determining the preamble, emergency measures, transitional provisions and other issues that do not fall under the direct ambit of the thematic committees for submission to the Constituent Assembly. Owing to those delays, on 23 December, the Constituent Assembly announced an eighth amendment to its workplan for drafting the new constitution, reducing the public consultation period to three weeks and making the deadline for promulgation — 28 May 2010 — increasingly tight. On 25 December, the Constitutional Committee decided on 98 constitutional provisions, most of which centred on terminology, through a voting process.

B. Integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel

12. The Special Committee to supervise, integrate and rehabilitate Maoist army personnel, to be convened by the Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, on a weekly basis, had met only five times by late December. It has made little or no substantive progress during the reporting period, and has yet to consider proposals submitted by its Technical Committee on 17 September for a supervisory mechanism and a code of conduct for the Maoist army personnel. UCPN-M has not attended several meetings, and in mid-November it stated that command and supervision modalities as well as integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist army should be resolved at the senior-most political level rather than by the Special Committee, as part of the broader negotiations to end the current political stalemate.

13. The Technical Committee completed its assessments of the Maoist army cantonments as scheduled on 28 October, and has continued to develop a plan for the integration of Maoist army personnel. It is also planning a number of seminars and study visits in early 2010 in order to draw on best practices from other post-conflict countries that have undertaken integration and rehabilitation programmes.

C. Discharge of disqualified Maoist army personnel

14. After several months of discussion, on 16 December, an action plan was adopted for the discharge of the disqualified Maoist army personnel verified as minors, as part of the decision to discharge all disqualified personnel. It was signed by representatives of the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction and UCPN-M, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and the Representative of the United

Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Nepal, and was witnessed by the Minister of Peace and Reconstruction, Rakam Chemjong, UCPN-M Chairman "Prachanda", my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, and my Representative in Nepal.

15. The action plan includes the predischarge screening of some 2,973 personnel verified as having been minors in May 2006, followed by an official discharge and the monitoring of UCPN-M compliance by a United Nations team. Under the plan, UCPN-M commits itself to ensuring that the minors can freely and independently determine their areas of return or resettlement and, if they so wish, avail themselves of rehabilitation support. The Government has continued to express its readiness to provide vocational, educational and other rehabilitation packages with assistance from the United Nations.

16. CPN-M (and subsequently UCPN-M) has been listed in the annexes of the past five annual reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict as a party to conflict recruiting and using children, and compliance with the action plan is necessary for it to be de-listed from the report. The United Nations has underlined its concern over any future possible induction of those disqualified as minors into any groups engaged in violence. The discharge of the 4,008 personnel verified as minors and late recruits is scheduled to begin on 7 January.

D. Other challenges affecting the peace process

17. The Government has continued to implement a special security plan aimed, in particular, at controlling crime and road blockades in the Tarai districts and has reported an improvement in the security situation in the targeted areas as well as more widely throughout the country. There has been a significant increase in the number of security personnel deployed, including through the establishment of additional Armed Police Force bases and increased patrolling. Arrests of alleged members of armed groups and criminals have increased, but so have accusations of arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces. The Armed Police Force has begun recruiting to fill over 11,000 new vacancies, of which 5,000 were approved during this reporting period. The status of the over 10,000 new positions proposed by the Nepal Police remains under consideration by the Ministry of Finance.

18. Friction between youth wings of the political parties has continued, with violent clashes taking place between cadres of the UML-affiliated Youth Force and the Young Communist League of UCPN-M in the eastern and mid-western regions in early November and December, resulting in injuries on both sides. Some militant ethnic and identity-based groups, notably in eastern Nepal, have continued their extortion drives. Other ethnic and indigenous groups continue to lobby and organize demonstrations to press the Government to fulfil their demands, as among other things, for greater inclusion in the public sector. In early December, the Madheshi People's Rights Forum-Nepal (MPRF-N), led by Upendra Yadav, announced a renewed campaign to mobilize the Madheshi community in this regard.

III. Status of the United Nations Mission in Nepal

19. As at 7 December 2009, 264 of the authorized 278 personnel were serving in the Mission. Out of 192 civilian personnel, 31 per cent are women. Of the 52 substantive staff, 40 per cent are women, while 27 per cent of 140 administrative staff are women. As of that date, 5 of the 72 arms monitors serving with the Mission were women. Gender representation in this area is dependent on the nomination of candidates by Member States. As a result of UNMIN's efforts to recruit national staff from traditionally marginalized groups, 50 per cent of the 125 national staff are from traditionally marginalized groups, and 33 per cent are women.

IV. Activities of the United Nations Mission in Nepal

A. Arms monitoring

20. The Arms Monitoring Office has continued to monitor compliance by the Nepal Army and Maoist army with the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies. The arms monitors continued round-the-clock surveillance at the Nepal Army weapons storage site in Kathmandu and the weapons storage areas in the seven main cantonment sites of the Maoist army. The teams of arms monitors at the main cantonment sites also regularly visit the satellite cantonment sites. Other operations are conducted by mobile teams from the headquarters of the Arms Monitoring Office in Kathmandu. At the request of the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, arms monitors witnessed salary payments for October and November to verified Maoist army personnel at the cantonment sites.

21. On 23 October, Kathmandu-based representatives of the following member States of the Security Council, China, France, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, visited the Nepal Army weapons storage site in Kathmandu and the Maoist army main cantonment site in Ilam district. They met with senior Nepal Army and Maoist army personnel, viewed the weapons storage facilities and other areas in the cantonment site, and were briefed by the Mission's Chief Arms Monitor.

22. The Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee continued to meet under the chairmanship of the UNMIN Chief Arms Monitor. Senior officers representing the Nepal Army and the Maoist army continued to cooperate on decision-making, information exchange and dispute resolution. Between October and December, the Committee held four meetings and considered two alleged violations of the Agreement, one of which was unsubstantiated while the other remains under investigation. During the reporting period, the Arms Monitoring Office investigated several allegations made by the Government of misconduct by Maoist army personnel outside the cantonments. In the interim, neither the Nepal Army nor the Maoist army have carried out the recommendations proposed to them, as indicated in my previous report to the Security Council, to confirm the number of their respective personnel and increase their cooperation with UNMIN on the notification of troop movements (see S/2009/553, para. 24); nor has there been progress on formalizing confidence-building measures related to joint humanitarian and mine action-related activities.

B. Child protection

23. The Child Protection Unit continued to contribute to planning for the discharge and rehabilitation of the Maoist army personnel disqualified as minors, including taking part in the information and consultation phase. The Unit worked closely with United Nations country team partners to review the rehabilitation packages for the disqualified and with the Political Affairs Office on the action plan for the discharge of the minors. The Unit also continued to work with the Nepal task force established under Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) which is co-chaired by UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)-Nepal, to implement the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism under that resolution. The Unit coordinated inputs for the annual report on children and armed conflict in Nepal, which will be considered by the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, and will also contribute to the Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict for 2009.

C. Political affairs

24. The Political Affairs Office continued to monitor and analyse the political situation in the country, including through field visits to the regions, and to assist Mission leadership in supporting the peace process. Political affairs officers met regularly with stakeholders, including Government officials, representatives of political parties and civil society organizations, as well as international actors. The activities of militant groups, both armed and unarmed, and their potential to disrupt the peace process were monitored, as were the dynamics among the political parties and the evolving role of traditionally marginalized groups in the peace process. The Office followed the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly and the work of its committees in preparing the new constitution. The Office has also led in coordinating the activities of UNMIN with the United Nations country team partners regarding the discharge and rehabilitation of the Maoist army personnel disqualified as minors and late recruits.

D. Public information

25. Media reports continued to draw attention to UNMIN's arms monitoring role, particularly in light of increasing Government allegations of the Maoist army's misconduct outside the cantonments. The Public Information and Translation Unit provided information and clarification to the media based on the findings of the Arms Monitoring Office. The Government and senior leaders also drew UNMIN's attention to alleged UCPN-M involvement in incidents which they described as breaches of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. My Representative underlined in several interviews the need to establish a national monitoring body for this purpose. The Unit also provided support to the visit of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

E. Safety and security

26. The security situation has been generally stable across the country. Traffic was severely disrupted during some of the Maoist protest programmes in Kathmandu and elsewhere in the country, but United Nations vehicles have generally been permitted to move freely. A number of improvised explosive devices planted at Government buildings and political party offices were defused by the local security forces' disposal personnel and no casualties were reported. There were no direct threats against United Nations staff or property during the reporting period.

V. Human rights

27. There was no substantial progress during the reporting period in addressing impunity and ensuring accountability for human rights violations committed during or after the conflict. The Government continued to demonstrate a lack of willingness to hold members of the security forces accountable for human rights violations committed during or after the conflict and continues to withhold cooperation with civilian authorities responsible for investigating these cases. UCPN-M similarly failed to cooperate with the authorities and end impunity despite several assurances that those responsible for human rights abuses would be held accountable.

28. On 24 December, the Government promoted to the second-in-command of the Nepal Army a major general who was the commander of the Tenth Brigade at a time when serious human rights violations, including arbitrary detention, torture and disappearances, occurred at the then Royal Nepal Army Maharajguni barracks during the period from 2003 to 2004. This significant promotion took place despite strong criticism by national and international human rights groups. OHCHR-Nepal expressed concern and issued a press release reaffirming its position that those implicated in human rights violations committed by members of the Tenth Brigade in 2003 and in 2004 should not be promoted, pending completion of a full, transparent and impartial investigation. Subsequently, the Supreme Court ordered a stay of this promotion in response to a public interest litigation. The Court will consider the merits of the case later in January.

29. The Nepal Army recently deployed a military officer accused of involvement in the 2004 torture and killing of 15-year-old girl, Maina Sunuwar, as a member of a Nepal Army contingent serving with the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). The deployment took place on 7 September, despite the issuance of an arrest warrant for the officer by the Kavre District Court in January 2008. On 13 September, the Court also issued an order instructing the Nepal Army to suspend him immediately. Upon the recommendation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat, in view of the serious nature of the allegations, the officer was repatriated on 12 December. He remains in Army custody despite a formal request by the Nepal Police and public calls by the National Human Rights Commission, civil society leaders and members of the international community to turn him over to the police so that he can be brought before the Court. Senior Nepal Army personnel and the Minister of Defence have made statements challenging the civilian court's jurisdiction over the case, and indicating the officer would not be turned over to the police before a military court of inquiry had completed an investigation into the

circumstances of the repatriation. As recommended in my previous report, the Nepal Army should comply urgently with the court order.

30. UCPN-M has failed to take any action to address the alleged involvement of party members in serious crimes, both during and since the conflict, including the killings of businessman Ram Hari Shrestha; journalists Birendra Sah and Arjun Lama, who were reportedly killed by Maoists in April 2005, and the bombing of a bus in Madi in Chitwan district on 6 June 2005, which resulted in the death of 36 civilian passengers. OHCHR has repeatedly raised all these cases with the UCPN-M leadership as emblematic of continuing impunity.

31. The Government has taken a number of positive steps towards the establishment of transitional justice institutions. Draft legislation criminalizing disappearances and establishing the framework for a commission of inquiry on disappearances was approved by the Council of Ministers and submitted to the Legislature-Parliament in November. While improvements were made to the draft legislation, it does not comply with international standards. The Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction completed its series of public consultations with victims of the conflict and other stakeholders including women and children on a draft bill establishing the framework for a truth and reconciliation commission. The current version of the bill falls short of international standards. However, the Ministry has indicated that it will now revise the bill before submitting it to the Cabinet.

32. The National Human Rights Commission continued to face challenges in implementing its mandate. A new law governing the Commission's work is yet to be passed and the bill submitted by the Government to the Legislature-Parliament has been broadly criticized as being inconsistent with the Paris Principles.

33. In November, the Prime Minister launched a year-long campaign to address gender-based violence. An action plan was prepared after broad consultations with a range of stakeholders including women, human rights activists and representatives of the Government, political parties, civil society and non-governmental organizations. It is primarily aimed at increasing victims' access to justice and reducing the incidents of gender-based violence.

34. In early December, a journalist was attacked and left seriously injured in Rukum district. She had recently written an article about the killing of a UML leader allegedly by the CPN-M, in Rukum during the conflict. A team of human rights defenders conducted a fact-finding mission in the district and found that 20 persons were arrested in connection with the incident and later released.

VI. Mission support

35. The mission support component continued to support UNMIN activities throughout the Mission area, with priority being given to the work in the seven main Maoist army cantonment sites. The continued presence of arms monitors at the cantonments and their conduct of mobile patrolling require the wide deployment of personnel, as well as communications and air transport resources.

VII. United Nations country team coordination

36. During the reporting period, development activities were affected by the political stalemate, in part due to the disruptions caused by the Maoist protest programmes. The passage of the budget in November averted an imminent crisis in Government spending and forestalled disruption to donor supported development programmes. Recent attempts at extortion by ethnic movements, political party representatives and armed groups against development and humanitarian actors prompted the United Nations and donors jointly to issue a renewed appeal on 23 November, for all parties to respect the "Basic operating guidelines". The guidelines were developed by development and humanitarian partners during the conflict period to protect the freedom of the respective organizations to assist beneficiaries and implement projects without military and political interference.

37. Severe and protracted drought, sustained high food prices and the global economic crisis have tripled the number of food insecure people in Nepal over the last three years. An additional 300,000 Nepalese are now facing food insecurity because of the poor summer crop harvest, bringing the total number to 3.7 million. This is aggravating the already very poor nutritional status of children, and levels of acute malnutrition in some districts are now above emergency thresholds. The World Food Programme (WFP) has been providing food assistance to more than 1.6 million of those Nepalese most in need, which has helped to stave off hunger for many. This level of assistance will be needed through early 2010 until winter crops are harvested in May and June.

38. The United Nations Mine Action Team will soon commence the final phase of its work, to be completed during 2011, in support of the Government's efforts to meet its commitment under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to clear all remaining minefields in Nepal. The United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal has released $500,000, which partly meets the funding requirements for this final phase of the Action Team's work. If additional funding is made available, it is expected that Nepal will become one of the first countries in the world to be free of the impact of mines after a conflict provided that progress in clearance is sustained. By 8 December, the Action Team had safely destroyed over 40,000 improvised explosive devices and other dangerous items from the Maoist army cantonment sites. Mine risk education led by the Department of Education supported by UNICEF has trained and equipped over 1,000 teachers in the 20 most affected districts. Some 500,000 schoolchildren have been educated in avoiding the risks of mines, and more importantly, explosive remnants of war, which have caused more casualties in Nepal than mines.

39. In parallel with the launch of the Government's National Plan on Gender-Based Violence in early September, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and the United Nations Women's Fund (UNIFEM) launched a joint United Nations programme on gender-based violence. The project aims to increase the use of community-level gender-based violence prevention and protection services by women, men and children. The programme will complement the recent expansion of UNICEF support for paralegal committees from 23 to all 75 districts, to be financed through a $10 million grant from the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom.

40. The United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal approved four new programmes costing $5.5 million, including: reporting and responding to conflict-related child rights violations (Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009)); services to victims of sexual violence (Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1612 (2005), 1820 (2008), 1880 (2009) and 1888 (2009)); support to the Government for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008); and support for an impartial and efficient reparations system for conflict-affected persons.

VIII. Observations

41. My successive reports to the Security Council have sought to provide a frank account of the state of Nepal's peace process and the role of the United Nations in supporting it. I have drawn attention to the serious problems that have plagued the process, largely stemming from the breakdown of trust and cooperation among the parties, particularly since the 2008 election of the Constituent Assembly, and more recently the May 2009 crisis, which further escalated tensions.

42. Since May, Nepal's political situation has become even more complex, with growing divisions within and among the parties. Positions have hardened at the opposing ends of the political spectrum, which has seriously eroded the common middle ground that had, from the outset, defined the peace process and remained its driving strength. There is a growing and worrying risk of the political discourse being dominated by extreme voices and the focus shifting away from the peaceful and democratic path.

43. I have underscored to all concerned the grave danger posed by this situation. While I remain hopeful about the ability of Nepal's political leaders to come to an appropriate political resolution, it is a cause for serious concern that the numerous rounds of discussions between the three major parties over the past several months have not resulted in a resolution of the stalemate. Despite the welcome revival of the inter-party talks in December, the signing of an action plan to discharge the disqualified Maoist army personnel and the ending of the UCPN-M blockade of the Legislature-Parliament, at the time of writing, the major disagreements that have brought the peace process close to a standstill remain unresolved, increasing the risk of its collapse. Once again, I strongly urge the Nepalese parties to make every effort to return to their tradition of working by consensus that has yielded positive results and to lead the peace process to a successful conclusion. Nepal's friends and the supporters of the peace process, including in the region, should now, more than ever, encourage the parties to overcome their differences.

44. Integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist army personnel and democratization of the Nepal Army are critical aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Successive Governments of Nepal have conveyed to me their intention to complete the integration and rehabilitation process of the Maoist army personnel without delay. The implementation of this process would allow UNMIN to wind down its work. Regrettably, there is little progress to report on this front. While technical work has continued around the identification of options for the Maoist army personnel, albeit with limited participation of the UCPN-M in the Special Committee, the critical decisions that need to be taken at the political level to ensure

forward movement have remained elusive in a political environment that is becoming increasingly polarized and confrontational.

45. Failure to address the continuing political constraints carries great risks. In extending the mandate of UNMIN four times in response to the requests of the Government of Nepal, the Security Council has repeatedly urged the Nepalese parties to work together for the success of the peace process and to safeguard the significant gains that Nepal has made in ending its 10-year civil war, holding elections which resulted in a broadly representative Constituent Assembly and declaring a republic.

46. The country is now entering a crucial period. The coming few months before the May 2010 date for the promulgation of a new constitution are critical for the successful conclusion of the peace process. While it is my desire to see UNMIN complete its mandated tasks and end its presence as soon as possible. However, withdrawing the Mission at this particular time of heightened tension would not be the wisest course. Should the Government of Nepal, in consultation with the parties, request an extension of the Mission's current mandate, I would recommend that the Security Council respond positively to such a request.

47. It must be underlined, however, that the continued presence of UNMIN in Nepal during the coming period must be seen in the context of the stated commitment of the parties to adhere to the timelines set out in the interim constitution, and not simply as another extension of the term of the Mission. Should the Council endorse an extension of the mandate, it is of the utmost importance, given the weight of the issues at stake, that such extension lead to a set of clear benchmarks and timelines being agreed upon by the parties as soon as possible. These, in turn, should create an unambiguous exit strategy for UNMIN within the time frame of the new extension.

48. I would like to convey my appreciation to the members of the Security Council and other Member States for their continued support to Nepal and to the work of the United Nations in support of the peace process. I would also like to thank my Representative, Karin Landgren, and her staff, as well as partner organizations in Nepal, for their dedicated efforts.